



Commission on Disabilities
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 4, 2025
City Hall Room 430

Commissioners Present: Ashlie Castaldo, Chair; Brooke Marinan, Vice Chair; Allison Fochs; Michaela Mullin; Michelle McDonald; Jill Isola Johnson

Commissioners Absent: Christina Johnson, Secretary; Marie Anderson; Amanda Paszak

Guests Present: Marsha Lue, City of Duluth; Andrea Crouse, of Vibrant Streets Duluth; Doug Mckillop, citizen.

- Chair Castaldo called the **6/04/2025 25** Commission on Disabilities meeting to order.
 - **Approval of the June 2025 agenda**
 - **Approval of May 2025 minutes** (Fochs & Castaldo)
- Current Disability Issues & Announcements
- Accessible Parking Update
 - Marsha Lue- received 1 request for accessible parking at “112 W 5th St. Unit 1”
 - Resident typically parks in front of home, residents have garage, but vehicle does not fit; Recommendation of approval .
- Guest Speaker: Andrea Crouse of Vibrant Streets Duluth, to speak on accessibility infrastructure
 - (Crouse)Working with Minnesota move and focusing areas in Hillside community due to the higher rates of citizens using methods other than personal vehicles for transportation in this neighborhood.
 - (Crouse) Works with MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization)
 - (Crouse) Works with MIC (The Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council)
 - (Crouse) Work with Zeitgeist
 - (Crouse) Example of upcoming project: Intersection 6th Ave E
 - (Crouse) Had high car accident rate, confusion for drivers when encountering Emergency Vehicles, high rate of pedestrian-vehicle accidents.
 - (Crouse) Intersection original design was made when road was state highway 194 and does not suit modern uses for city street.
 - (Crouse) Changes being implemented: change from 4-lane to 3-lane, adding push button crosswalks, better Median and space on side of

roads, improvements to sidewalks and intersection corners for pedestrians, allows students to safely walk to school that currently are unable.

- (Crouse) Zeitgeist offers place to hear and apply visions from community
 - (Crouse) Offers documentary film and podcast media and other medias through Media Art Lab in Zeitgeist
 - (Crouse) Adult Learn to Bike, Adult bike rehab, group learn to bike class, walking audits in winter, (this fall) Transportation Academy (older adults, disabled, other non-driving locals)
- (Crouse) Vibrant Streets Duluth “Flow Street Proposal”
- (Crouse) Flow = fun + slow (street), encourages slower vehicle traffic to increase safety for bikers and walkers.
- (Crouse) Project looking at 1st St. W between 21st Ave W & 6th Ave W
- (Crouse) Areas of focus with recent demolition to areas on 1st St like Cozy bar, Tarif apartment building, and upcoming removal of parking structure.
- (Crouse) Project stage currently gathering reports from businesses and citizens to better understand need/want
- (Crouse) Vehicles will have options to drive regular speed down 1 block on Superior St or up one block on 2nd St still.
- (Michelle McDonald) asked if any new traffic lights for 6th and 7th W?
- (Crouse) no
- (Fochs) the issue with drivers not allowing pedestrians to walk when flashing lights show designation “walk”.
- (Crouse) Superior Street Project uses much of what is in Flow Street Project in plans/design
- (Crouse) asking for Letter from Commission that supports Vibrant Street Duluth & Flow Street Project
- Parks & Reck Commission
 - (Marinan) May meeting discussed the funding for the 3rd branch of the Parks & Reck Department, no specific funds designated for accessibility, conclusion Parks falls short of needed budget to maintain city.
- New Business
 - Downtown Duluth & Disability Pride Event, July 9, 2025 at 11-1:30pm
 - Speaking Mayor and Chair Ashlie Castaldo

Old Business

- (Marsha Lue) No update to skywalk
- Public comment
 - (Mckillop) Doug is a long-term resident of Duluth that has needed different levels of mobility devices since a injury 35 years ago. He currently needs to use a wheelchair and discuss the ongoing issues with finding housing that is correctly implementing his needs.
 - (Mckillop) Often finding “accessible apartments” to have narrow doors/halls, counters or cabinets too high, sinks not built with wheelchair able to roll up to/under, shower stalls too small and /or have lip stopping wheelchair entrance (few examples)

(Mckillop)issues with vague laws with own local interpretations often loosely monitored if reviewed.

- (McDonald) expresses apology for experiencing, suggested contact “Duluth Tenets Union”
 - (Fochs) When/how does a landlord determine when to give up to general public an accessible apartment to fill vacancy
- Topic of closed doors at Essentia Health on main-line bus stop closed, Essentia keeping door shut from low staff and not wanting non-client to use internal space
Fochs spoke downtown-twin cities
(Marsha Lou) received contact from Madilyn for Duluth to be re-recognized as bike-friendly community (application due soon)
- Adjourned Motion Michelle McDonald & Jill Isola Johnson (4:40pm)

Next Meeting:

Wednesday August 6, 2025

3:30PM-4:30PM

City Hall room 430

The public is invited to submit written comment prior to the meeting by humanrights@duluthmn.gov or mailing comments to 411 W 1st St, City Hall, Duluth, MN 55802.
Please note that all public comments are considered Public Data.